

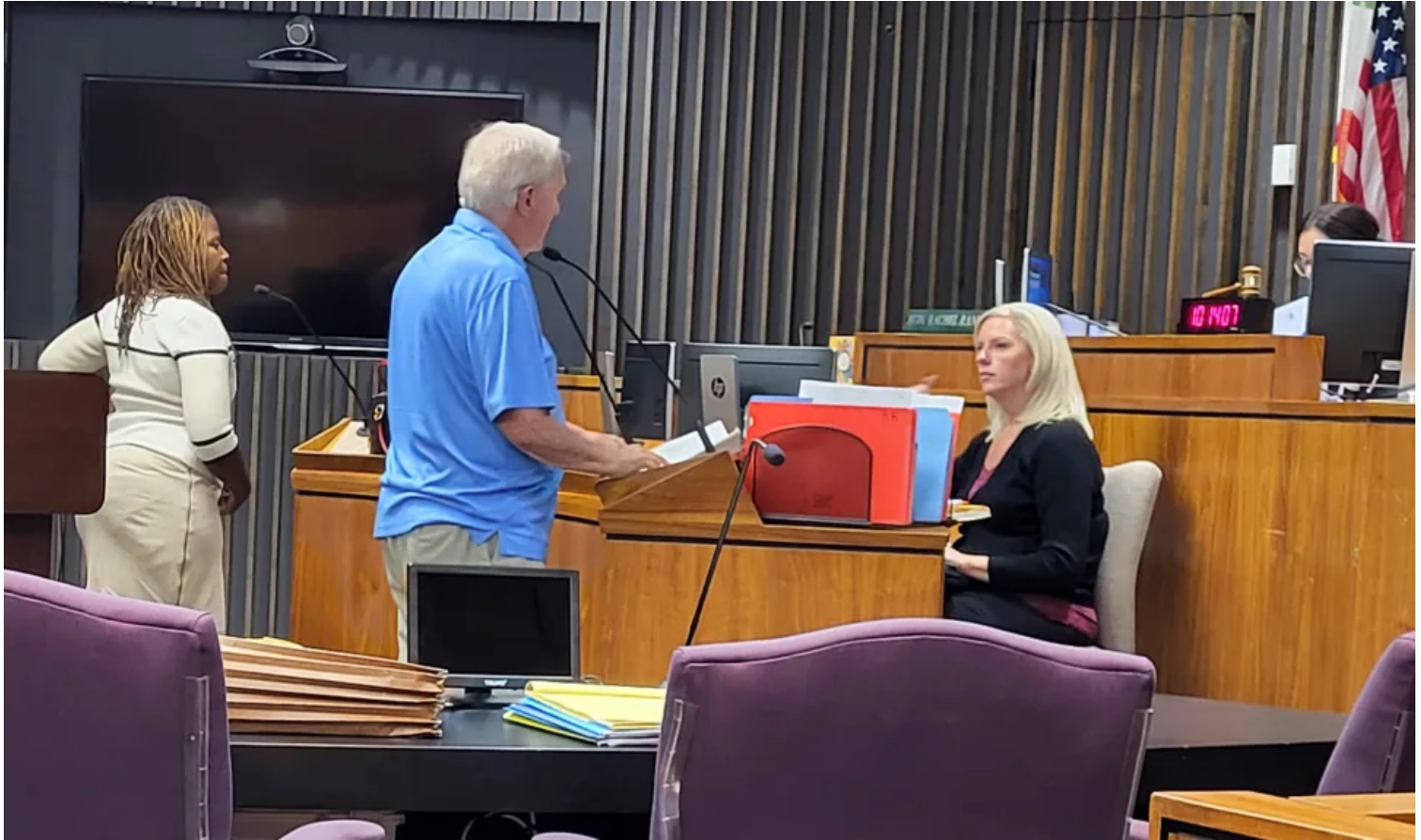
Hall-Rayford et al. v. Owens et al.,

**Exhibit B to
Plaintiffs' Verified Complaint
for Civil Rights Violations**

LOCAL NEWS

Judge considers Eastpointe mayor's request for PPO against councilman

Opinion expected within 14 days



Eastpointe Mayor Monique Owens (left) during an Aug. 23 hearing where she was seeking a personal protection order against Eastpointe Councilman Harvey Curley (right). (PHOTO BY SUSAN SMILEY)

By **SUSAN SMILEY** | ssmiley@medianewsgroup.com | Macomb Daily

PUBLISHED: August 23, 2022 at 5:58 p.m. | UPDATED: August 23, 2022 at 6:07 p.m.

Eastpointe Mayor Monique Owens will have to wait a few more days to learn if her request for a personal protection order against Eastpointe Councilman Harvey Curley is granted.

In Macomb County Circuit Court Tuesday, Judge Rachel Rancilio said she would take the request under advisement and issue an opinion within the next 14 days.

Owens' complaint stems from an alleged incident during the Cruisin' Gratiot event on June 18. In a case report from the Macomb County Sheriff's Office that was obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request, Owens alleges she was assaulted by Harvey during the opening ceremonies of the cruise. According to the report, Owens told police Harvey was yelling at her and putting his hands in her face and that she felt "fear, panic, and intimidation."

That case was dismissed and Owens' request for a personal protection order initially denied but a hearing on the matter was set and held Tuesday morning.

Owens and Harvey each testified and had one witness testify on their behalf.

Owens acknowledged she was not invited to speak during the opening ceremonies of the cruise but that she got on to the stage and after Curley closed the ceremony, approached the microphone and spoke for approximately five minutes. She said afterwards, Harvey verbally attacked her.



Eastpointe Mayor Monique Owens (third from the left) was escorted from the Macomb County Circuit Court building by a Sheriff's deputy.(PHOTO BY SUSAN SMILEY)

"He has always been enraged with me, but this was different," said Owens. "He yelled at me, he was trying to humiliate me, and he had his hands in my face."

Owens said several times she was afraid for her life and called to a clergy member, who had just given a pre-cruise prayer, to help her.

Harvey said it has long been a Cruisin' Gratiot policy that no politicians speak at the event as it is not city-sponsored and said he was upset Owens had taken it upon herself to take the mic after being told not to and that he slammed his clipboard on the stage when he was exiting it. The opening ceremony included a prayer service, which had just ended when Owens took the stage.

"Yes, I was upset, but enraged? I've never been enraged in my life," said Harvey, who has been on the Cruisin' Gratiot board for 23 years. "I wasn't screaming and I didn't cuss. I said, 'you weren't invited to speak; how dare you get up there and speak' and then I said that I was really upset and needed to pray."

At that point, Harvey said the five pastors who had spoken during the opening ceremony surrounded him and they all prayed together.

Bishop Eric Lloyd of the Rhema International Church in Harper Woods was one of the pastors who led the crowd in prayer during the cruise opening ceremony and testified on behalf of Owens. He said he heard Owens call out asking for his help after she exited the stage.

"I could see the fear on her face," said Lloyd. "I did hear her tell him to put his hands down and I was trying to separate the two. I told him it was not the time or place and told him to calm down."

Cruisin Gratiot board member Sheila Ulinski, who said she was working at the registration table next to the stage at the time of the incident, testified on behalf of Curley.

"Mr. Curley was upset," said Ulinski. "A threat? No. Angry? Yes. When someone hijacks your program it tends to make you upset."

Rancilio said based on Tuesday's testimony, she did not believe Harvey acted appropriately, but she was also not sure his action's merited a personal protection order.

"I don't know if a personal protection order is appropriate in this case, but I certainly do know that the behavior that you engaged in that day was not appropriate," said Rancilio. "It doesn't matter if she was invited to speak or not invited to speak or if she did speak or not or who told her to speak."

Rancilio said she needed time to consider the case and would issue a written opinion within 14 days.

Owens and Lloyd exited the courthouse together accompanied by a sheriff's deputy.